

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

MERARI GARCIA-ARCOS,

Defendant.

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ORDER

10-cr-76-bbc

Attached for the parties' consideration are draft voir dire questions, jury instructions and a verdict form.

Entered this 30<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2010.

BY THE COURT:

/s/

STEPHEN L. CROCKER  
Magistrate Judge

Voir Dire: United States v. Garcia-Arcos, 10-cr-76-bbc

Statement of the case: This is a criminal case, in which the defendant, Merari Garcia-Arcos, is charged with unlawfully possessing a firearm as an alien illegally present in the United States. The defendant has entered a plea of not guilty to the charge against him.

Have any of you heard of this case before today? Would this affect your ability to serve impartially as a juror in this case?

1. Scheduling: this case will begin today and will conclude tomorrow. Are any of you actually unable to sit as jurors because of this schedule?

2. Is there anything about the nature of the charge in this case that might affect your ability to be impartial in this case?

3. The court reads Pattern Jury Instructions of the Seventh Circuit:

The defendant is presumed to be innocent of the charge. This presumption remains with the defendant throughout every stage of the trial and during your deliberations on the verdict, and is not overcome unless from all the evidence in the case you are convinced beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant is guilty.

The government has the burden of proving the guilt of the defendant beyond a reasonable doubt, and this burden remains on the government throughout the case. The defendant is not required to prove his innocence or to produce any evidence.

The defendant has an absolute right not to testify. The fact that the defendant does not testify cannot be considered by you in any way in arriving at your verdict.

Would any of you be unable or unwilling to follow these instructions?

4. Ask counsel to introduce themselves, the defendant and the case agent. Ask whether jurors know them.

5. Invite each juror, in turn, to rise, and provide the following information:

Name, age, and city or town of residence.

Marital/partner status and number of children, if any.

Current occupation (former if retired).

Current (or former) occupation of your spouse/partner and any adult children.

Any military service, including branch, rank and approximate date of discharge.

Level of education, and major areas of study, if any.

Memberships in any groups or organizations.

Hobbies and leisure-time activities.

Favorite types of reading material.

Favorite types of television shows.

Whether you regularly listen to talk radio, and if so, to which programs.

Whether you regularly use the internet to visit sites other than e-mail or personal business, and if so, what types of sites you visit most often.

Whether you have bumper stickers on your vehicles and what they say.

6. Do any of you in the jury box know each other from before today?

7. The defendant is Latino [*or* Hispanic]. Would any of you find it difficult to serve as an impartial juror in a case in which a Hispanic man is charged with crimes involving cocaine distribution?

8. The defendant does not speak English well and will be using a telephonic interpreter to assist him during this trial. Is there anything about the fact that this defendant does not speak English well, or about his use of an interpreter that would affect your ability to be impartial in this case?

9. During trial you will hear evidence that the defendant is a citizen of Mexico who was not legally present in the United States. Do any of you have any strong opinions or feelings about illegal aliens that might affect your ability to be a fair juror in this case? [Sidebar for answers]

10. Other than what you have already told us, do any of you belong to any groups or organizations that concern themselves with immigration issues?

11. [If the defendant wants this topic broached] During trial you may hear evidence of acts by defendant that his former girlfriend has characterized as domestic abuse. Do any of you have any strong opinions or feelings about domestic violence that might affect your ability to be a fair juror in this case? [Sidebar for answers]

12. [If the defendant wants this topic broached] Have any of you, your relatives, or close friends ever been a victim of domestic violence or ever been accused or convicted of any offense involving domestic violence? [Sidebar for answers].

13. How many of you own firearms or live with someone who possesses firearms? Would this affect your ability to be impartial in this case?

14. Have any of you, your family or close friends ever been injured by a firearm?

15. Other than what you have already told us, do any of you belong to any groups or organizations that concern themselves with firearms or the possession of firearms, either for or against?

16. Do any of you have any strong opinions or feelings about firearms or the possession of firearms that might affect your ability to be a fair juror in this case? [Sidebar if necessary]

17. Have any of you, your relatives, or close friends ever been accused of, or convicted of any criminal offense? [Sidebar if necessary]. Would this affect your ability to be impartial in this case?

18. Do any of you, by virtue of past dealings with the United States government, or for any reason, have any bias for or against the government in a criminal case?

19. Have any of you, your relatives, or close friends ever worked for the local, county, state, or federal government? Would this affect your ability to be impartial in this case?

20. Have any of you, your relatives, or close friends ever worked for, or had other professional contact with any law enforcement, investigative or security company or agency, or any prison? Would this affect your ability to be impartial in this case?

21. Have any of you ever belonged to any organization or group that excluded people because of their race, gender, or religion?

22. Would any of you judge the credibility of a witness who was a law enforcement officer or government employee differently from other witnesses solely because of his or her official position?

23. Would any of you judge the credibility of a witness who had been convicted of a crime in the past differently from other witnesses solely because of this prior conviction?

24. Would any of you judge the testimony of a witness who was African American differently from other witnesses solely because of the witness's race?

25. Would any of you judge the testimony of a witness who was Latino/Latina differently from other witnesses solely because of the witness's ethnic background?

26. If either defendant were to choose to testify, would any of you judge his credibility differently from other witnesses solely because it was the defendant who was testifying?

27. Have any of you, your relatives, or close friends ever been the victim of any crime? Would this affect your ability to be impartial in this case?

28. Have any of you, your relatives, or close friends ever been a witness in a trial? Is there anything about this experience that might affect your ability to be impartial in this case?

29. Have any of you, your relatives, or close friends ever had any negative experience with any lawyer, any court, or any legal proceeding that would affect your ability to be impartial in this case?

30. How many of you have served previously as a juror in another case? Please tell us in which court you served, approximately when, the type of cases you heard, whether you were foreperson, and the verdicts.

31. If at the conclusion of the trial you were to be convinced of the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt, is there any one of you who would not, or could not, return a verdict of guilty?

32. If at the conclusion of the trial you were not to be convinced of the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt, is there any one of you who would not, or could not, return a verdict of not guilty?

33. The court will instruct you on the law to be applied in this case. You are required to accept and follow the court's instructions in that regard, even though you may disagree with the law. Is there any one of you who cannot accept this requirement?

34. Do you know of any reason whatever, either suggested by these questions or otherwise, why you could not sit as a trial juror with absolute impartiality to all the parties in this case?

## JUROR BACKGROUND INFORMATION

When asked to do so by the court, please stand and provide the following information about yourself:

Name, age, and city or town of residence.

Marital/partner status and number of children, if any.

Current occupation (former if retired).

Current (or former) occupation of your spouse/partner and any adult children.

Any military service, including branch, rank and approximate date of discharge.

Level of education, and major areas of study, if any.

Memberships in any groups or organizations.

Hobbies and leisure-time activities.

Favorite types of reading material.

Favorite types of television shows.

Whether you regularly listen to talk radio, and if so, to which programs.

Whether you regularly use the internet to visit sites other than e-mail or personal business, and if so, what types of sites you visit most often.

Whether you have bumper stickers on your vehicles and what they say.

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

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JURY INSTRUCTIONS

10-cr-76-bbc

**I. INTRODUCTORY INSTRUCTIONS**

Members of the jury, we are about to begin the trial of the case. Before it begins, I want to tell you how the trial will proceed and how you should conduct yourselves during the trial.

**Your Duties as Jurors**

As jurors, you have two duties. Your first duty is to decide the facts from the evidence that you will see and hear in this court. This is your job, not my job or anyone else's.

Your second duty will be to take the law that I will give you at the end of the case and apply it to the facts to decide if the government has proved the defendant guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

You must perform these duties fairly and impartially. Do not let sympathy, prejudice, fear or public opinion influence you. Do not let any person's race, color, religion, national ancestry or gender influence you.

Nothing that I say or do during the trial is meant to indicate any opinion by me about what the facts are or about what your verdict should be.





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### **The Criminal Charge**

The charge against the defendant is in a document called an indictment. You will have a copy of the indictment during your deliberations.

The indictment in this case charges that the defendant committed the crime of unlawfully possessing a firearm while he was an alien illegally in the United States. The defendant has pleaded not guilty to the charge.

The indictment is simply the formal way of stating what crime the defendant is accused of committing. It is not evidence that the defendant is guilty and it should not raise even a suspicion of guilt.

### **The Defendant is Presumed Innocent**

The defendant is presumed innocent of the charge. This presumption stays with the defendant throughout the case. It is not overcome unless from all the evidence in the case, you are convinced beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant is guilty as charged.

The government has the burden of proving the defendant's guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. This burden stays with the government throughout the case. The defendant is never required to prove his innocence. He is not required to produce any evidence at all.

### **How the Trial Will Proceed**

First, the Assistant United States Attorney will make an opening statement outlining the government's case. Immediately after, defendant's counsel will make an opening statement outlining defendant's case. Keep in mind that what is said in opening statements is not evidence; it is simply a guide to help you understand what each party expects the evidence to show.

Second, after the opening statements, the government will introduce evidence in support of the charges. At the conclusion of the government's case, the defendant may introduce evidence. The defendant is not required to introduce any evidence or to call any witnesses. If the defendant introduces evidence, the government may then introduce rebuttal evidence.

Third, after the evidence is presented, the lawyers will make closing arguments explaining what they believe the evidence has shown and what inferences you should draw from the evidence. What is said in closing argument is not evidence. Because the government has the burden of proof, the Assistant United States Attorney has the right to give the first closing argument and to make a short rebuttal argument after the defendant's closing argument.

Fourth, I will instruct you on the law that you are to apply in reaching your verdict.

Fifth, you will retire to the jury room and begin your deliberations.

The trial day will run from 9:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. You will have at least an hour for lunch and two additional short breaks, one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

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### **Notetaking**

The clerk will give each of you a notepad and pencil for taking notes. This does not mean you have to take notes; take them only if you want to and if you think that they will help you remember the evidence when you are deliberating. Do not let notetaking interfere with your important duties of listening carefully to all of the evidence and of evaluating the credibility of the witnesses. Just because someone has written something down, this does not mean that the written note is more accurate than another juror's mental recollection of the same thing. No one of you is the

“secretary” for the jury, responsible for recording evidence . Each of you is responsible for recalling the testimony and the other evidence.

Although you can see that this trial is being recorded by a court reporter, you should not expect to be able to use trial transcripts in your deliberations. You will have to rely on your own memories.

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### **No Communication During the Trial**

During recesses you should keep in mind the following instructions:

First, do not discuss the case either among yourselves or with anyone else during the course of the trial. The parties have a right to expect that you will keep an open mind throughout the trial. You should not reach any conclusions about this case until you have heard all of the evidence, you have heard the lawyers' closing arguments, you have received my instructions on the law, and you have retired to deliberate with the other members of the jury about your verdict.

I must warn you, in particular, against commenting about the trial in an e-mail or a blog or Twitter. There have been news accounts recently about cases that have had to be re-tried because a member of the jury communicated electronically about the case during the trial. You can imagine what this would mean in the cost of a re-trial, the inconvenience to your fellow jurors whose work would have gone for nothing and the stress experienced by the defendant.

Second, do not permit any third person to discuss the case in your presence. If anyone tries to talk to you despite your telling him not to, report that fact to the court as soon as you are able. Do not discuss the event with your fellow jurors or discuss with them any other fact that you believe you should bring to the attention of the court.

Third, although it is a normal human tendency to talk with people with whom one is thrown in contact, please do not talk to any of the parties or their attorneys or the witnesses. By this I mean not only do not talk about the case, but do not talk at all, even to pass the time of day. This is the only way the parties can be sure of the absolute fairness and impartiality they are entitled to expect from you as jurors.

Fourth, do not read about the case on the Internet, in newspapers, or listen to radio or television broadcasts about the trial. If a headline catches your eye, do not examine the article further. Media accounts may be inaccurate and may contain matters that are not proper for your consideration. You must base your verdict solely on the evidence produced in court.

Fifth, no matter how interested you may become in the facts of the case, you must not do any independent research, investigation or experimentation. Don't look up materials on the internet or in other sources.

### **How To Consider the Evidence**

You must make your decision in this case based only on the evidence that you see and hear in this court. Do not consider anything you may see or hear outside of court.

The evidence consists the testimony of the witnesses, the exhibits admitted in evidence and stipulations. A stipulation is an agreement between both sides that certain facts are true.

Sometimes during a trial I take judicial notice of certain facts that may be regarded as matters of common knowledge. You may accept those facts as proved, but you are not required to do so.

Nothing else is evidence. The lawyers' statements and arguments are not evidence. If what a lawyer says is different from the evidence, the evidence is what

counts. The lawyers' questions and objections likewise are not evidence. A lawyer has a duty to object if he thinks a question is improper. If I sustain an objection to a question asked by a lawyer, then you must not speculate on what the answer might have been.

If during the trial I strike a witness's answer to a question or strike an exhibit from the record, or If I tell you to disregard something, then these things are not evidence and you may not consider them.

It is proper for a lawyer to interview any witness in preparation for trial.

Part of your job as jurors is to decide how believable each witness is, and how much weight to give each witness's testimony. Some factors you may consider are: the witness's age, intelligence, and memory; the witness's ability and opportunity to see, hear or know the things that the witness testified about; the witness's demeanor while testifying; whether the witness had any bias, prejudice or other reason to lie or to slant his or her testimony; inconsistent statements or conduct by the witness; and the believability of the witness's testimony in light of the other evidence presented. You may also consider any other factors that shed light on the believability of each witness's testimony.

The defendant has an absolute right not to testify during this trial. You must not consider in any way the fact that he may choose not to testify. [You should not even discuss it in your deliberations].

Give the evidence whatever weight you believe it deserves. Use your common sense in weighing the evidence, and consider the evidence in light of your own every

day experience. You are allowed to draw reasonable inferences from facts. In other words, you may look at one fact and conclude from it that another fact exists. Any inferences you make must be reasonable and must be based on the evidence in the case.

You may have heard the terms “direct evidence” and “circumstantial evidence.” Direct evidence is evidence that, if you believe it, directly proves a fact. Circumstantial evidence is evidence that indirectly proves a fact.

For example, direct evidence that it rained last Friday would be testimony from a witness who tells you that she walked through the rainstorm. Circumstantial evidence that it rained last Friday would be testimony from a witness who saw other people’s wet umbrellas drying in the foyer that day.

You are to consider both direct and circumstantial evidence. The law does not say that one is better than the other. It is up to you to decide how much weight to give to any evidence, whether direct or circumstantial.

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

MERARI GARCIA-ARCOS,

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JURY INSTRUCTIONS

10-cr-76-bbc

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II. POST TRIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Members of the jury, you have seen and heard all the evidence and the arguments of the attorneys. Now I will instruct you on the law.

All of the introductory instructions that I gave you at the beginning of this trial still are in effect. I will give you copies of those instructions to take back to the jury room with you.

You have received evidence of a statement said to be made by the defendant to \_\_\_\_\_. You must decide whether the defendant did make the statement. If you find that the defendant did make the statement, then you must decide what weight, if any, you believe the statement deserves. In making this decision, you should consider all matters in evidence having to do with the statement, including those concerning the defendant himself, and the circumstances under which the statement was made.



In deciding the believability of witnesses, you should judge defendant's testimony in the same way as you judge the testimony of any other witness.

The defendant has an absolute right not to testify. In arriving at your verdict, you must not consider the fact that the defendant did not testify.

You have heard evidence of acts of the defendant other than those charged in the indictment. Specifically, \_\_\_\_\_. You may consider this evidence only on the questions of \_\_\_\_\_. You should consider this evidence only for this limited purpose.

You have heard evidence that \_\_\_\_\_ have been convicted of crimes. You may consider this evidence only in deciding whether the testimony of any of these witnesses is truthful in whole, in part, or not at all. You may not consider this evidence for any other purpose.

You have heard [reputation/opinion] evidence about the character trait of \_\_\_\_\_ for truthfulness [or untruthfulness]. You should consider this evidence in deciding the weight that you will give to \_\_\_\_\_'s testimony.

You have heard [reputation and/or opinion] evidence about the defendant's character trait for [truthfulness, peacefulness, etc]. You should consider character evidence together with all the other evidence in the case and in the same way.

You have heard evidence that before the trial, witnesses made statements that may be inconsistent with their testimony here in court. If you find that it is inconsistent, you may consider the earlier statement only in deciding the truthfulness and accuracy of that witness's testimony in this trial. You may not use it as evidence of the truth of the matters contained in that prior statement. If that statement was made under oath, you may also consider it as evidence of the truth of the matters contained in that prior statement.

A statement made by the defendant before trial that is inconsistent with the defendant's testimony here in court may be used by you as evidence of the truth of the matters contained in it, and also in deciding the truthfulness and accuracy of the defendant's testimony in this trial.

\_\_\_\_\_ has admitted lying under oath. You may give his testimony such weight as you believe it deserves, keeping in mind that it must be considered with caution and great care.

You have heard testimony that \_\_\_\_\_ have received benefits from the government in connection with this case. Specifically, \_\_\_\_\_ You may give the testimony of these witnesses such weight as you believe it deserves, keeping in mind that it must be considered with caution and great care.

You must consider with caution and great care the testimony of any witness who is currently addicted to drugs. It is up to you to determine whether the testimony of a drug addict has been affected by drug use or the need for drugs.

The witnesses \_\_\_\_\_ gave opinions about matters requiring special knowledge or skill. You should judge this testimony in the same way that you judge the testimony of any other witness. The fact that such a person has given an opinion does not mean that you are required to accept it. Give the testimony whatever weight you think it deserves, considering the reasons given for the opinion, the witness' qualifications and all of the other evidence in the case.

You have heard recorded conversations. These recorded conversations are proper evidence and you may consider them, just as any other evidence. When the recordings were played during the trial, you were furnished transcripts of the recorded conversations prepared by government agents. The recordings are the evidence, and the transcripts were provided to you only as a guide to help you follow as you listen to the recordings. The transcripts are not evidence of what was actually said or who said it. It is up to you to decide whether the transcripts correctly reflect what was said and who said it. If you noticed any difference between what you heard on the recordings and what you read in the transcripts, you must rely on what you heard, not what you read. And if after careful listening, you could not hear or understand certain parts of the recordings, you must ignore the transcripts as far as those parts are concerned.

## **THE INDICTMENT**

The indictment in this case is the formal method of accusing the defendant of offenses and placing the defendant on trial. It is not evidence against the defendant and it does not create any inference of guilt.

The defendant is charged in the indictment as follows:

## COUNT 1

On or about March 24, 2010, in the Western District of Wisconsin, the defendant, Merari Garcia-Arcos, an alien illegally and unlawfully in the United States, knowingly and unlawfully possessed in or affecting commerce a Charter Arms Explorer II, .22 caliber pistol, serial number B011561, this firearm having previously traveled in interstate commerce.

The defendant has entered a plea of not guilty to this charge.

The defendant is not on trial for any act or any conduct not charged in the indictment.

The defendant is presumed to be innocent of the charge against him. This presumption continues during every stage of the trial and your deliberations on the verdict. It is not overcome unless from all the evidence in the case you are convinced beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant is guilty as charged.

The government has the burden of proving the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. This burden of proof stays with the government throughout the case. The defendant is never required to prove his innocence or to produce any evidence at all.

The indictment charges that the offense was committed "on or about" a certain date. The government must prove that the offenses happened reasonably close to

those dates but it is not required to prove that the alleged offenses happened on those exact dates.

### ELEMENTS OF THE OFFENSE

To sustain the charge against the defendant in Count 1, the government must prove these elements:

(1) On and before March 24, 2010 the defendant was an alien illegally and unlawfully in the United States; [*N.B.: the statute states “illegally or unlawfully;” is this a distinction that needs to be addressed in the jury instructions?*]

(2) On or about March 24,, 2010,the defendant knowingly possessed the firearm charged in Count 1; and

(3) This firearm had traveled in interstate commerce prior to defendant's possession of it.

If you find from your consideration of all the evidence that each of these elements has been proved beyond a reasonable doubt, then you should find the defendant guilty.

If, on the other hand, you find from your consideration of all the evidence that any one of these elements has not been proved beyond a reasonable doubt, then you must find the defendant not guilty.

The term “knowingly” means that the defendant realized what he was doing and was aware of the nature of his conduct and did not act through ignorance, mistake or accident. Knowledge may be proved by a defendant's conduct and by all the facts and circumstances surrounding the case.

Possession of an object is the ability to control it. Possession may exist even when a person is not in physical contact with the object, but knowingly has the power and intention to exercise direction or control over it, either directly or through others.

## **DELIBERATIONS**

Upon retiring to the jury room, select one of your number as your presiding juror. This person will preside over your deliberations and will be your representative here in court.

A verdict form has been prepared for you. [Court reads verdict form.]

Take this form to the jury room, and when you have reached unanimous agreement on the verdict, your foreperson will fill in, date and sign the form.

Although you have seen that the trial is being recorded by a court reporter, you should not expect to be able to use trial transcripts in your deliberations. You will have to rely on your own memories.

The verdict must represent the considered judgment of each juror. Whether your verdict is guilty or not guilty, it must be unanimous. You should make every reasonable effort to reach a verdict. In doing so, you should consult with one another, express your own views and listen to the opinions of your fellow jurors. Discuss your differences with an open mind. Do not hesitate to re-examine your own views and change your opinion if you come to believe it is wrong. But do not surrender your honest beliefs about the weight or effect of evidence solely because of the opinions of your fellow jurors or for the purpose of returning a unanimous verdict.

The twelve of you should give fair and equal consideration to all the evidence and deliberate with the goal of reaching an agreement consistent with the individual judgment of each juror. You are impartial judges of the facts. Your only interest is to determine whether the government has proved its case beyond a reasonable doubt.

If it becomes necessary during your deliberations to communicate with the court, you may send a note by a bailiff, signed by your foreperson or by one or more members of the jury. No member of the jury should ever attempt to communicate with the court by any means other than a signed writing, and the court will never communicate with any member of the jury on any subject touching the merits of the case otherwise than in writing, or orally here in open court. You will note from the oath about to be taken by the bailiffs that they too, as well as all other persons, are forbidden to communicate in any way or manner with any member of the jury on any subject touching the merits of the case. You must not reveal to any person, including the court, your numerical split on any verdict question until you have reached a unanimous verdict.

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

VERDICT

10-cr-76-bbc

MERARI GARCIA-ARCOS,

Defendant.

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COUNT 1

We, the Jury in the above-entitled cause, find the defendant, Merari Garcia-Arcos,

\_\_\_\_\_  
("Guilty" or "Not Guilty")

of the offense charged in Count 1 of the indictment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Presiding Juror

Madison, Wisconsin

Date: \_\_\_\_\_